

Information Meetings Scheduled on New Program to Assist Small Businesses without Health Insurance

Idaho's small business owners have an opportunity to obtain low-cost health insurance for their employees this year. Statewide public meetings are scheduled to begin March 15th to explain the new program called **Access to Health Insurance**.

This program will provide health insurance premium assistance to 1,000 uninsured adults and their minor children. The meetings are designed to explain how this new program will work, what an employer must do to participate, and how an employee may qualify. Owners of small businesses (2-50 employees), as well as insurance representatives who offer small group health insurance plans, are encouraged to attend.

"The Access to Health Insurance program makes health insurance premiums more affordable for lower income employees of qualified small businesses," says Patti Campbell, Project Manager for the Access to Health Insurance program. "Idaho's uninsured population has grown by 26 percent since 2000, even while Idaho has added jobs. This program will provide health insurance premium assistance of up to \$100 per adult per month to income eligible small business employees and their spouses."

To participate the employer must operate a small business, currently **not** offer health insurance, and be willing to pay 50% or more of the employee's premium, or if spouse enrolls, 50% of the combined insurance premium costs for the employee and spouse. The employee must meet income guidelines to qualify for premium assistance (i.e., income for a three-person household of approximately \$2,400 a month or less).

Beginning March 15th informational meetings will be held in: Weiser, Boise, Idaho Falls, Caldwell, Pocatello, Lewiston, Grangeville, Coeur d'Alene, Sandpoint, Post Falls, Hailey, Burley, Twin Falls and Challis.

To register:

- Call **1-866-234-9488** toll free or
- Email: **kinghort@idhw.state.id.us** with the number of people, and date and location you would like to attend

For more details visit us at: **www.AccessToHealthInsurance.idaho.gov**